

Fall 8-15-2009

ENG 4765-001: Professional Editing

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Recommended Citation

Fredrick, Terri, "ENG 4765-001: Professional Editing" (2009). *Fall 2009*. 128.
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_fall2009/128

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ENGLISH 4765: PROFESSIONAL EDITING

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INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Editing refers to the range of tasks you may be asked to complete in your professional career (even if you work primarily as a writer rather than editor). Copyediting involves line-by-line editing for consistency, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and (sometimes) style. Comprehensive editing, on the other hand, involves editing for global issues such as content, organization, style, and design. We will practice both types of editing as part of this course. In all cases, professional editors must be aware of a basic paradox affecting their work. On the one hand, editing is based not on intuition about language, but on specific expertise in the areas of grammar, punctuation, spelling, style, and organization. For this reason, we will use professional terminology; field-specific copyediting marks; and conventions of grammar, style, and organization in this course. On the other hand, the most effective editing addresses the rhetorical situation, even when those needs violate “rules.” Several times during the semester, you be asked to edit for specific purposes and audiences.

A second challenge is that editors work with texts they have not written. Initially, working with another writer’s text may be challenging for college students who are used to the individual model of writing typically associated with higher education. Editors must learn how to affect positive, and often significant, changes to a document, while respecting the writer’s continued “ownership” of that document.

The specific objectives for the course are as follows:

- Develop professional language for discussing editing
- Copyedit effectively for grammar, punctuation, spelling, and consistency
- Edit documents globally for organization, content, style, and design
- Adapt editing to specific rhetorical situations
- Develop effective strategies for working with writers and clients

A note to graduate students: As graduate students in a cross-listed course, you are expected to meet a higher standard of both theory and practice. Your requirements will differ from those of the undergrads in two ways: (1) you will write a scholarly research paper at the end of the semester and (2) you will be asked to work with a more complex website during the website analysis assignment.

COURSE MATERIALS

- Rude, Carolyn. *Technical Editing*, 4th edition
- *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition
- A good quality dictionary
- A handbook of grammar and usage (the more comprehensive, the better)
- Recommended: A USB drive

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Homework/Quizzes: Throughout the semester, you will complete textbook exercises, which we will then go over in class. They will not be graded, but will receive points for completeness. We will also have unannounced quizzes over the assigned reading.

Précis: You will be assigned to read two academic or theoretical articles on editing issues. For each of these articles, you will write a detailed précis (content summary) of the article along with three questions or comments about the article. Evaluation criteria: close reading; ability to paraphrase; correctness and clarity of prose

Copyediting/style editing assignments: You will do line-by-line editing of four documents. These assignments will apply the skills from our readings and exercises and will receive individual grades. Evaluation criteria: correct use of markup symbols; ability to identify and correct errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling; ability to edit for consistency and style; legibility and clarity of editing

Midterm/final exams.

Comprehensive editing assignments: You will comprehensively edit two documents for content, organization, style, and design. Evaluation criteria: ability to identify and edit for comprehensive issues, ability to work effectively with writers, professionalism, clarity and correctness in writing.

Website analysis report: You will be assigned to analyze a website for content, organization, style, and design. You will write a letter to the organization suggesting revisions. Evaluation criteria: ability to identify and edit websites effectively, clarity and correctness in writing, professionalism.

Client project: You will comprehensively edit a major document or a series of smaller documents on behalf of a client. Midway through the semester, you will submit a proposal outlining the project you plan to complete. Evaluation criteria: ability to work with clients and colleagues, comprehensive editing, copyediting, adaptation to audience and purpose, proposal writing

Research paper [grad students only]: Drawing on scholarly sources, you will write an 5–8 page paper on a topic in the field of editing. Evaluation criteria: ability to identify and synthesize sources, coherence of argument, command of scholarly writing, effective self-editing

ASSESSMENT BREAKDOWN

Assignment	Due date	% grade undergrads	% grade grads
Homework/Quizzes/Précis	Variable	10	5
Assignment 4.1	Sep 04	2.5	2.5
Assignment 9.1	Sep 11	2.5	2.5
Assignment 11.1	Sep 28	5	5
Copyediting exam	Oct 07	7.5	5
TE p. 246-7 #1	Oct 19	5	5
Assignment 16.1	Oct 28	7.5	7.5
Assignment 18.1	Nov 09	10	10
Website analysis	Nov 16	10	10
Final exam	Dec 15	10	7.5
Client project		30	30

<i>Project proposal</i>	<i>Nov 02</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Final project</i>	<i>Dec 09</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Research paper</i>	<i>Dec 15</i>	<i>----</i>	<i>10</i>

A note concerning the assessment breakdown:

I reserve the right to make additions and alterations to this assessment breakdown should the need arise. Students will be informed in class and in writing if to any changes are made.

WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE

The website analysis may be submitted to the Electronic Writing Portfolio (EWP). If you choose to submit a writing assignment from this course, you **must** do so before the end of the semester. To submit a paper or for more info on the EWP, go to www.eiu.edu/~assess/electronic_writing_portfolio1.htm.

ATTENDANCE:

According to the *Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills* published by the Department of Labor, the number one reason employers cite for firing employees in their first post-collegiate jobs is absence and tardiness. Your classes, therefore, offer you an excellent opportunity to practice the professional skill of prompt attendance.

- You may miss up to four classes. Each additional absence will reduce your grade by 2%.
- If you must miss a class, you are still responsible for meeting assignment deadlines. Submit assignments via the appropriate WebCT drop box or via email.
- You cannot receive participation points on days you are absent.
- If you want to know what you missed in class, talk to a classmate. Assignment sheets and most handouts will be available on WebCT.

DEADLINES

Due dates for homework and assignments are listed on the course syllabus.

- Homework (due dates listed as **Read, Complete, or Bring**) and **précis** must be submitted by the beginning of class time on the date listed. Late work will not be accepted.
- **Projects** must be submitted by the end of the business day (4 p.m.) on the date listed. Late projects will be docked 5% each day until they are turned in.

EXPECTED CONDUCT

This class focuses on communicating in professional settings. In a workplace setting, certain types of conduct would be expected and outlined in a code of conduct. We have one here, too. In addition to the policies pertaining to attendance and deadlines, pay attention to the following course policies:

- Class correspondence (i.e., emails you send to someone in the class, including me) should be written professionally and according to the expectations of the business world. Expect to receive feedback from me on the style, content, and organization of your emails.
- In this course, you will need to use advanced features of common software such as Microsoft Word, and you may be asked to use programs that are new to you. I will give you advice and out-of-class assistance at your request, but I expect you to be willing to develop the software skills you need to complete projects effectively.

- Keep multiple copies of all the work you produce for this class, at least until semester grades have been assigned.
- Do not check email or Facebook, surf the web, send text messages, etc. during class.
- All projects must be submitted in order to pass the course.
- Failures of academic integrity will not be tolerated. This includes copying homework or allowing your homework to be copied, plagiarizing someone else's words or ideas, failing to cite paraphrased or quoted sources correctly, or passing off work created for another class as work created for this course. According to English Department policy, I must (and will) assess grade consequences and report to the Office of Student Standards any failures of academic integrity. If you have any questions regarding appropriate handling of sources, collaboration, or past work, talk with me before turning in an assignment.

If circumstances arise that may impact your ability to maintain our course policies, address the situation as you would in the workplace—professionally, courteously, and in advance.

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Most accommodations can be met easily in this class. If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

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DAILY SYLLABUS

TE = *Technical Editing*

White rows = Coleman Hall 3120 (computer lab); Shaded rows = Coleman Hall 3130

DATE	DUE	IN-CLASS ACTIVITY
Aug 24		Introduction to course
Aug 26	Read: TE Ch 1, 4 Complete: TE p. 63-4 #1	Discuss types/goals of editors, basic markup; TE p. 64-5 #2
Aug 28	Read: TE Ch 2, 7	Discuss audiences; TE p. 121 #2; p. 122 #6
Aug 31	Read: TE Ch 3; Rosenberg	Discuss writer/editor relationship
Sep 02	Read: TE Ch 8 Complete: TE p. 138 #2	TE p. 138 #3 Discuss style manuals, style guides
Sep 04	Read: TE Ch 9 Project: Assignment 4.1	TE p. 150-1 #1-2, 6
Sep 07	No School – Labor Day	
Sep 09	Read: Kolln (Ch 1)	Review sentence parts
Sep 11	Read: TE Ch 10 Project: Assignment 9.1	Review parts of speech
Sep 14	Complete: TE p. 169-70 #5-6	TE p. 170-171 #7-10
Sep 16	Read: Leonard and Gilsdorf; write response	Discuss article
Sep 18	Read: TE Ch 11 Complete: TE p. 192 #1-2	TE p. 192-194
Sep 21	Read: Williams; write response	Discuss article; TE p. 194-196
Sep 23	Read TE p. 66-71; Ch 6	Work on assignment 11.1
Sep 25		Work on assignment 11.1
Sep 28	Read: TE p. 197-205 Project: Assignment 11.1 (editing and electronic styles)	TE p. 212-213 #1-6
Sep 30	Read: TE p. 205-211	Editing tables
Oct 02		Quantitative information (editing); Discuss final projects
Oct 05	Project: Assignment 11.1 (table)	Review for copyediting exam
Oct 07		Copyediting exam
Oct 19	No School – Fall Break	
Oct 12	Read: TE Ch 13 Complete TE p. 226 #5	TE p. 225-7 #1, 6
Oct 14	Read: TE Ch 14	Discuss comprehensive editing
Oct 16	Read: Ch 22	Discuss legal/ethical editing issues
Oct 19	Read: TE Ch 15 Complete: TE p. 263 #1	TE p. 263-5 #2-8
Oct 21	Project: TE p. 246-7 #1	TE p. 263-5 #2-8; style activities
Oct 23	Read: TE Ch 16 Complete: TE p. 283 #4	TE p. 282-4 #1-3
Oct 26	Read: Cook	Practice editing for style

	Complete: TE p. 265 #9	
Oct 28	<u>Project: Assignment 16.1</u>	Assignment 18.1—Form teams
Oct 30	Read: TE Ch 17	TE p. 301–2 #5–6
Nov 02	Read: TE Ch 18 Project: Client project proposal	Discuss editing visual design
Nov 04	Read: TE Ch 19 Complete: TE p. 344 #1	Discuss editing illustrations
Nov 06		Work on 18.1; final project mtgs
Nov 09	Read: TE Ch 21 <u>Project: Assignment 18.1</u>	Discuss website editing
Nov 11		Work on website analysis
Nov 13		Work on website analysis
Nov 16	Project: <u>Website analysis</u>	TBA
Nov 18	Read: TE Ch 20	Discuss editing for global contexts
Nov 20		
Thanksgiving Break		
Nov 30		Work on client project
Dec 02		Work on client project
Dec 04	Bring: Draft of cover letter and analysis	Workshop drafts
Dec 07		Work on client project
Dec 09	Project: <u>Client project</u>	Review for final
Dec 11		Review for final
Dec 15	Project: Research paper [grad only]	Final exam (12:30–2:30)